

FAQs: COVID-19 Screening

All patients and essential visitors must be screened for COVID-19 before in-person patient care is provided. Please review [Pandemic Practice Advisory #3, COVID-19 Screening](#)

- 1) Question: Does the active COVID-19 screen include taking daily temperatures of staff and patients?

Answer: The Ministry of Health states that it is optional for health care professionals and employers to take temperatures of patients, essential visitors and staff. However, if you decide to do so, you must use a thermometer with disposable tips, or a non-contact forehead thermometer. You must also wear a surgical/procedural mask or Health Canada approved clear mask.

- 2) Question: If a patient fails the COVID-19 screen, what should we document?

Answer: Document in the patient record that the patient, or the patient's essential visitor, failed the COVID-19 screen.

If the screen took place over the phone (preferred method), document the advice you gave about getting assessed for COVID-19. If the screen took place in the office, document the strategies you took to reduce transmission (isolating the patient, requiring masks and hand hygiene) as well as the advice you gave about COVID-19 assessment.

- 3) Question: If a staff member fails a COVID-19 screen or has a temperature, do we keep the information in a separate medical/HR file?

Answer: Yes, the information should be kept in a separate file if a staff member fails the COVID-19 screen. This is for the purposes of Public Health's contact tracing.

As an employer, you have an obligation to ensure a safe work environment for all employees. This means that it is important to act quickly to reduce transmission in the event an employee fails a COVID-19 screening. If you are recommending a staff member be assessed for COVID-19, you should also document the assessment results. If the staff member tests negative for COVID-19, they may return to work.

If the staff member tests positive for COVID-19, next steps will be provided by Public Health. The employer or manager should also contact Public Health Ontario for directions about informing those who have been in contact with the staff member.

4) Question: what should we do if a patient or family member refuses to participate in the COVID-19 screen?

Answer: The patient has the right not to answer the questions in the COVID-19 screen. You will then inform the patient that they cannot receive audiology or speech-language pathology in-person services, and that the in-person appointment will be deferred until they are willing to be screened.

If the family member, as the essential visitor, refuses to be screened, inform them that they cannot be present during the audiology or speech language pathology session.

5) Question: Can CASLPO comment on the requirement to report to Public Health?

Answer: Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists are not on the Ministry's list of health care professionals who are required to make mandatory reports of people with suspected COVID-19. You are not required to report a positive COVID-19 screen to Public Health Ontario. Patients, health care professionals and administrative staff who test positive for COVID-19 at one of the provincial assessment centres will be known to Public Health Ontario.

6) Question: Are patients who travel between provinces directed to not access services for a 14-day period?

Answer: Inter-provincial travel restrictions are beginning to change. To keep up to date, please refer to the Government of Canada's [Travel Restrictions page](#) or check the Government of Ontario's website.

The COVID-19 screen has recently changed (June 10th 2020) and now asks if the patient or essential visitor has travelled out of the country in the last 14 days. If they have, it is a positive screening result and you should defer the in-person appointment.

7) Question: What about signage for patients who are seen in their homes? I am a private SLP without a website.

Answer: Passive COVID-19 screening refers to signage that patients and essential visitors can review before their in-person appointment. It reminds them of COVID-19 symptoms, masking requirements and hand hygiene. This information and other expectations can be discussed with the patient or family member on the telephone when you call the patient to carry out the active COVID-19 screen before your appointment. Information can also be sent electronically, if the patient and family are in agreement.